

In the Claims

1        1. [Previously Presented] An image forming device consumable  
2 monitoring method comprising:

3                storing information regarding a plurality of consumables usable by an image  
4 forming device to form hard images, wherein the stored information for an individual  
5 one of the consumables includes a stored consumable identifier which identifies the  
6 respective consumable and a stored party identifier utilized to identify a proper party  
7 of the respective consumable;

8                receiving information regarding a consumable to be verified including a  
9 received consumable identifier which identifies the consumable to be verified and a  
10 received party identifier utilized to identify the proper party associated with the  
11 consumable to be verified;

12               comparing the received consumable identifier with at least one of the stored  
13 consumable identifiers;

14               comparing the received party identifier with at least one of the stored party  
15 identifiers; and

16               outputting a message responsive to the comparings to indicate use of the  
17 consumable to be verified by an unauthorized party who is not authorized to use the  
18 consumable.

1        2. Canceled.

1        3. [Original] The method of claim 1 further comprising forwarding a  
2 command to an image forming device coupled with the consumable to be verified to  
3 disable at least one operation of the image forming device coupled with the  
4 consumable to be verified responsive to the comparings.

1        4. [Previously Presented] The method of claim 1 further comprising  
2 forwarding another message comprising a warning message to an image forming  
3 device coupled with the consumable to be verified responsive to the comparings.

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1        5. [Original] The method of claim 1 further comprising recording the  
2 received consumable identifier, the received party identifier, and date and time  
3 information regarding the reception of the received information.

1        6. [Original] The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving the received  
2 party identifier comprises receiving a received device identifier which identifies the  
3 image forming device which communicated the information and wherein the storing  
4 comprises storing the stored party identifier comprising at least one stored device  
5 identifier which identifies an image forming device associated with the proper party  
6 for the respective consumable and wherein the comparing the received party  
7 identifier comprises comparing the received device identifier with the stored device  
8 identifier.

1        7. [Original] The method of claim 6 wherein the storing the stored party  
2 identifier comprises storing a plurality of stored device identifiers and the comparing  
3 the received party identifier comprises comparing the received device identifier with  
4 the plurality of stored device identifiers.

1        8. [Original] The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving the received  
2 party identifier comprises receiving the received party identifier which directly  
3 identifies the proper party of the respective consumable.

1        9. [Previously Presented] A consumable monitoring system comprising:  
2              a database configured to store information regarding a plurality of  
3 consumables usable by an image forming device to form hard images, wherein the  
4 stored information for an individual one of the consumables includes a stored  
5 consumable identifier which identifies the respective consumable, and a stored party  
6 identifier utilized to identify a proper party associated with the respective  
7 consumable;

8              an interface adapted to receive information regarding a consumable to be  
9 verified including a received consumable identifier which identifies the consumable  
10 to be verified and a received party identifier utilized to identify the proper party  
11 associated with the consumable to be verified;

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12 processing circuitry configured to compare the received consumable identifier  
13 with the stored consumable identifiers and to compare the received party identifier  
14 with the stored party identifier of a respective one of the consumables  
15 corresponding to the received consumable identifier; and

16 wherein the processing circuitry is configured to control outputting of a  
17 communication responsive to the received party identifier not matching the stored  
18 party identifier of the respective consumable and wherein the communication  
19 indicates the failure of the received party identifier to match the stored party  
20 identifier of the respective consumable.

1 10. [Previously Presented] The system of claim 9 wherein the processing  
2 circuitry is configured to forward the communication comprising a message to the  
3 proper party associated with the respective consumable responsive to the  
4 comparisons.

1 11. [Previously Presented] The system of claim 9 wherein the processing  
2 circuitry is configured to forward the communication comprising a command to  
3 disable at least one operation of an image forming device coupled with the  
4 consumable to be verified responsive to the comparison.

1 12. [Previously Presented] The system of claim 9 wherein the processing  
2 circuitry is configured to forward the communication comprising a warning message  
3 to an image forming device coupled with the consumable to be verified responsive  
4 to the comparison.

1 13. [Original] The system of claim 9 further comprising a memory device,  
2 and wherein the processing circuitry is configured to forward the received  
3 consumable identifier, the received party identifier, and date and time information  
4 regarding the reception of the received consumable identifier and the received party  
5 identifier to the memory device for storage.

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1           14. [Previously Presented] The system of claim 9 wherein the interface is  
2 adapted to receive the information regarding the consumable to be verified including  
3 the received party identifier comprising a received device identifier which identifies  
4 the image forming device which communicated the information and wherein the  
5 database is configured to store the stored party identifiers comprising at least one  
6 stored device identifier which identifies an image forming device associated with the  
7 proper party for the respective consumable and wherein the processing circuitry is  
8 configured to compare the received device identifier with the stored device identifier  
9 to compare the received party identifier with the stored party identifier.

1           15. [Previously Presented] The system of claim 9 wherein the database is  
2 configured to store the stored party identifier comprising a plurality of stored device  
3 identifiers which identify a plurality of image forming devices associated with the  
4 proper party of the respective consumable, and wherein the processing circuitry is  
5 configured to compare the received party identifier comprising a received device  
6 identifier with the stored device identifiers.

1           16. [Original] The system of claim 9 wherein the interface is adapted to  
2 receive the information regarding the consumable to be verified including the  
3 received party identifier which directly identifies the proper party of the respective  
4 consumable.

Cancel claims 17-21.

1           22. Canceled.

1           23. Cancel.

1           24. [Previously Presented] The method of claim 1 wherein the outputting  
2 comprises outputting the message to an owner of the respective consumable.

1           25. Canceled.

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1           26. [Previously Presented] The method of claim 1 wherein the comparing  
2 the received consumable identifier occurs before the comparing the received party  
3 identifier and the outputting comprises outputting the message responsive to the  
4 received consumable identifier matching at least one of the stored consumable  
5 identifiers and the received party identifier failing to match a stored party identifier  
6 of the respective consumable associated with the at least one stored consumable  
7 identifier.

1           27. Canceled.

1           28. Cancel.

1           29. Cancel.

1           30. [Previously Presented] The method of claim 1 wherein the message  
2 indicates the failure of the received party identifier to match any stored party  
3 identifier associated with the consumable to be verified.

1           31. [Previously Presented] The method of claim 26 further comprising,  
2 using the received consumable identifier, identifying the at least one stored party  
3 identifier to be used for the comparing with the received party identifier.

1           32. [Previously Presented] The system of claim 9 wherein the  
2 communication indicates use of the consumable to be verified by an unauthorized  
3 party.

1           33. [Previously Presented] The system of claim 32 wherein the processing  
2 circuitry is configured to address the communication for communication to the  
3 proper party and to control outputting of another communication comprising a  
4 warning message of unauthorized use to an image forming device coupled with the  
5 consumable to be verified.

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